Rangeland Management

The Idaho Rangeland Management Program consists of several major components: (1) implementing the Rangeland Health Standard and Guidelines; (2) issuing livestock use authorizations and renewing permits/leases; (3) issuing grazing decisions in order to meet resource objectives; (4) completing range improvements; (5) monitoring grazing and resource conditions and trends; and (6) processing, compliance, and preparation for litigation.

"By the end of the fiscal year, we had implemented Rangeland Health Standards and Guidelines on about 46 percent of the 11.9 million acres of public land in Idaho. We are on schedule to complete the implementation as planned in FY 2009."

Livestock Use

- Last year, about 1,900 permittees grazed livestock on 11.9 million acres of public land in Idaho.
- Close to one million Animal Unit Months (AUMs) of cattle, sheep, and horse use were authorized.
- Currently, 4 percent of the public rangelands are in excellent condition, 62 percent are in good or fair condition, 22 percent are in poor condition, and 12 percent are unclassified.
- Continuing efforts are underway to promote an upward trend in rangeland conditions.

Permit Renewal

- In Idaho, 172 livestock grazing permits were renewed and approximately 2,716 authorizations were issued.

Standards and Guidelines

- During FY 2002, Idaho BLM assessed an additional 193 allotments on 1.4 million acres for Rangeland Health Standards and Guidelines.
- By the end of FY 2002, we had implemented Standards and Guidelines in 634 allotments and on 5.4 million acres, which is about 46 percent of the total targeted public land in Idaho. Implementation of the Standards and Guidelines on all 11.9 million acres of public land in Idaho is projected to be completed in FY 2009.
- All permits and leases that were issued from the Standards and Guidelines assessment have been documented for Land Use Plan compliance, National Environmental Policy

Act compliance, and conformance to grazing regulations.

Range Improvements

- During FY 2002, the BLM in Idaho invested $650,817 to construct and install various types of range improvements, such as fences, cattle guards, pipelines, and water developments.

Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation

The objectives of the Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation (ESR) Program are to mitigate the harmful impacts of wildfires by reducing soil erosion. This minimizes the entry and spread of noxious weeds; improves the structure and diversity of the vegetation for multiple uses; and reduces the potential for future wildfires on public lands burned by wildfires.

"In FY 2002, over 48,000 acres of burned public lands in Idaho were rehabilitated."

- In FY 2002, 48,270 acres of burned public lands were rehabilitated. This rehabilitation included reseeding 34,000 acres with perennial plants and protecting 14,270 acres from use to allow the recovery of existing native or previously seeded plants.
- Twelve ESR plans were approved to rehabilitate a total of 48,300 acres (includes 34,000 acres seeded and an additional 14,300 acres protected for natural recovery). The total funding requested for these 12 ESR plans was $3.3 million dollars.

Great Basin Restoration Initiative

The Great Basin Restoration Initiative promotes the diversity and structure of plant communities to make them more resilient following disturbance and more resistant to invasion by exotic species over the long-term. This initiative is an effort to reverse the effects of disastrous wildfires, weeds, and adverse human impacts on wildlife habitat (especially sage grouse habitat), livestock forage, watershed stability, and land health on public lands in the Great Basin.

"This initiative is an effort to reverse the effects of disastrous wildfires, weeds, and adverse human impacts on wildlife habitat, livestock forage, watershed stability, and land health on public lands in the Great Basin."

- In the Great Basin, the BLM administers 75 million acres and is continuing its efforts to implement the Great Basin Restoration Initiative.
- Through appropriate management and restoration treatments, properly functioning lands will be maintained; degraded lands will be restored; and the social-economic fabric of local communities will be better sustained.
- To accomplish these objectives, a full-time coordinator has been hired to facilitate collaboration and build support for the objectives of the Initiative.

Noxious Weeds

More than 1.2 million acres of public land in Idaho are infested with noxious weeds. Major problems include leafy spurge, yellow star thistle, Dyer's wood, spotted and diffuse knapweed, rush skeletonweed, and others. Cooperation with county weed control organizations continues to be very important, and in the many areas where Cooperative Weed Management Areas (CWMAs) have been formed with federal, state, tribal, county, and private partners. The total integrated approach includes prevention, detection, improved resource management, biological control agents, and cultural, mechanical, and chemical control. Following treatment with herbicides, grasses are being planted in many trouble spots to biologically suppress the recurrence of weeds and decrease our dependence upon herbicides for weed control.

"During the year, we treated about 6,500 acres of public land for noxious weeds."

- During the year, we actively participated with over 19 multi-partner (federal, State, county, and private) Cooperative Weed Management Areas (CWMAs) across Idaho.
- About 6,500 acres of public land were treated for noxious weeds. The BLM provided $750,000 to the Idaho Department of Agriculture for the development of a cooperative program to map weed populations and to fund CWMAs.
- We continued to participate in a comprehensive weed control demonstration project, known as the Tri-State CWMA, along the Snake and Lower Salmon River corridors in cooperation with other agencies in Idaho, Oregon, and Washington.
- We are also an active participant in the Idaho Noxious Weed Coordinating Committee, which is a Statewide multi-partner group working together to control weeds.
- Efforts included an increased use of biological insects by Idaho BLM field offices to reduce or contain the spread of leafy spurge, rush skeleton weed, and yellowstar thistle.
- Geographic positioning system and data loggers were used to enhance weed inventory and monitoring efforts.